

Howland Wood - Curatorial

The Charleston Museum
[Charleston, SC]

1921-1933

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C. Nov. 17, 1921.

Mr. Newell,
Numismatic Society,
204th St. and Broadway,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Newell:

The Metropolitan Museum has referred me to you suggesting that you may be willing to help me in determining certain coins and seals. May I send these to you? There are three Chinese coins and one which is of considerable local interest. This is merely a sealing from an opal glass seal which seems to antedate the American Government as it bears the British coat-of-arms and around the margin "General Postoffice - America S."

If you are willing, we will forward these to you and much appreciate your assistance.

Very truly yours,

Laura M. Bragg

Director.

LMB/R

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C. Dec. 14, 1921.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway, between 155th and 156th Sts., N. Y.

My dear Mr. Wood:

We are sending you under separate cover, by registered mail, the coins about which we wrote you in November and which you have so kindly offered to identify for us.

The Museum has only a small coin collection which has not been exhibited as yet. We should like to know if these coins should be cleaned before we exhibit them or if they should be left uncleaned. It seems to me they would be more easily seen, if they were cleaned, but, on the other hand, in the case of an old coin they might not look so old. We have five old Roman coins which I suppose we had better leave as they are at any rate. Any information you may care to give us will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Emmet B. Richardson

Secretary to the Director.

December 27th, 1921

Mr. Emmet S. Richardson
The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S.C.

Dear Mr. Richardson:

I am returning to you the coins you sent on a little while ago for attribution. These comprise three Chinese coins and the impression of a Post Office seal; the latter is most interesting, especially as I have never seen anything like it.

Unless one is thoroughly familiar with cleaning coins, my advice would be to do nothing with them as it is a careful process, and some coins should not be cleaned at all. One can accomplish good results by using a good stiff jeweller's brush; this takes off more or less dirt, and often fixes up the coins sufficiently for display. Tarnished silver coins should never be cleaned by silver polish, or preparations that require rubbing. These should be dipped in some form of alkali, dependent largely on the condition of the tarnish. Corroded coins should only be cleaned by an expert. Ancient coins, as a rule, should not be touched.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C. Jan 14, 1922.

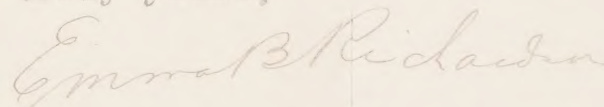
Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway, between 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Wood:

Your letter and the coins arrived some days ago but I have delayed acknowledging their receipt hoping that Miss Bragg would be able to write you herself. She, however, continues ill so I am writing for her to thank you for your attribution of the coins, and for your advice on the installation of our exhibit. Should you ever learn anything of the seal, we should appreciate your letting us know.

Thanking you again for your kindness, I remain

Very truly yours,



Secretary to the Director.

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C., June 19, 1923.

American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

We have recently had some correspondence with Mr. Harrold E. Gillingham of Philadelphia on the subject of a medal which the Museum has. He suggests that we join your Society as an Associate Member in order to obtain your publications. He also suggests that it might be possible to arrange to secure back numbers. Will you please let us hear from you on the subject.

You were kind enough to identify three Chinese coins for us last year.

Very truly yours,

Laura M. Bragg

Director.

LMB/R

June 21st, 1923

Miss Laura M. Bragg
Dir. The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S.C.

Dear Madam:

We are in receipt of your favour of June 19th, We should indeed be glad to add The Charleston Museum to our Membership list. The annual dues of an Associate Member are but five dollars, and this entitles one to all the publications issued by the Society throughout the year, and also gives one the privilege of subscribing for any medals which we may have struck. Any back numbers of our publications can be obtained at the price given on the enclosed list.

I am enclosing an application card which I should be happy to have you return to me should you decide to make your Museum a member of our Society.

Trusting we may hear from you further and thanking you for your enquiry, I am

Very truly yours,

Acting Secretary & Curator

HW/E
Encs.

FOUNDED 1773

INCORPORATED 1915

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

May 29, 1925.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York, City.

My dear Mr. Wood:

I am enclosing a coin which has been brought
in by one of our Museum members for identification.
Will you be kind enough to let me know what it is and
the value. I do greatly appreciate your help in
identifying coins.

Yours very truly,

Emmet B. Richardson

Secretary to the Director.

Enc.

June 3, 1925

Miss Emma B. Richardson
Secretary to the Director
The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S. C.

Dear Madam:

The piece that you sent us for attribution and which we are herewith enclosing is neither old nor a coin. Frankly, we cannot imagine why it was made, nor have we ever seen one like it. There is no ancient coin made in any such style or design and the metal is also wrong. The piece, moreover, is cast.

Very truly yours

HW C
enc.

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

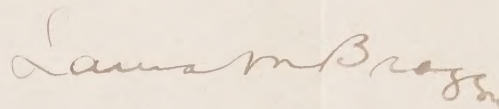
Aug. 22, 1925.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155 and 156 Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Wood:

I am enclosing 21¢ in stamps to cover the
cost of registration on the two coins which I sent
you yesterday. Will you please have them registered
for us upon their return, and greatly oblige.

Yours very truly,



Director.

Enc.
LMB/R

Did not send stamps

*Bank token of Montreal Canada about 1837 worth 5¢
960 Reis Brazil worth only silver value*

Mr. Wood - #2

I am also sending you by mail two coins which we would like to know about.

We are continually being asked the value of coins and are not able to tell the inquirers. Is there any book which will give us such information, concisely? We are on Gutter Brothers mailing list but it is almost impossible to find a particular coin without having to go through the whole list, although they seem very good and full.

I feel that this long list is an imposition and if you do not care to trouble with it, please advise us.

Yours very truly,

Lamson Rogers

Director.

LEB/R

August 28th, 1925

The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S.C.

Attention - Miss L. M. Bragg

Dear Madam:

Your two favours at hand. Very few of the coins in your letter of August 19th are worth over face value. I am returning the list as I have marked against the items ~~would~~ they are probably worth. Condition would govern their value as much as any one factor.

There is no book which will give you the information you desire concisely. There are so many coins that no one work can begin to contain them all. Coins must be seen in order to be properly valued.

I am enclosing a list of dealers to which you might refer in case coins are brought to you for sale.

Your letter of August 22nd enclosing the two coins at hand. The copper coin is a bank token of Montreal struck about 1837, and is worth five cents. The other coin is a 900 reis piece of Brazil. This is worth only its silver content.

I note that you omitted to enclose the stamps for return postage. I am sending the coins back to you by parcel post, insured.

Very truly yours,

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

February 10, 1926.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th & 156th Streets,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr Wood:

I am enclosing twelve (12) old coins which Miss Bragg would like to have you identify for us. Miss Bragg asks me to say if there is anything that should be done to these coins in order to make the identification possible, please have it done for us, and let us have the bill.

Yours very truly,

Secretary to the Director.

Encs.

P. S. As these coins - except four - have not been catalogued, I have put them in separate envelopes, and have numbered them. I am enclosing stamps to cover return postage.

February 17th, 1926

Miss E.B. Richardson
Director's Office
The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S.C.

Dear Madam:

I am returning, herewith, the coins which you wished to have identified. You will note that we have placed all of them, excepting one.

The only thing that you could do with these in order to clean them, would be to soak them for a while in oil and then brush them with a stiff brush. As a matter of fact, the poorest ones are not worth that trouble.

You enclosed but six cents in stamps. We should appreciate it if you would kindly send the balance due, at your convenience.

There is no charge for the attributions.

Very truly yours,

Encs.

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

Feb. 20, 1926.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Wood:

Thank you so much for identifying the coins for
the Museum.

I am enclosing 15¢ in postage stamps. I am very
sorry that the proper amount was not enclosed in the letter.
I got some one to mail it for me and I feel sure that in
putting the stamps in in the post office, some of them must
have fallen on the floor. I am glad you called my attention
to the matter.

Yours very truly,



Secretary to the Director.

Enc.

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

March 22, 1926.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th & 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Wood:

I am having to impose on your good nature again for the identification of the three enclosed "coins". It is, indeed, kind of you to do this for us and we greatly appreciate it.

We are in receipt of your letter inquiring about Indian medals and will answer it in a few days. We have three large silver pieces which were deposited with us as Indian medals by a former Indian agent but as they are framed it is hard to see exactly what they are. We will look into the matter, however, and write you.

Yours very truly,



Secretary to the Director.

Encs.

March 25th, 1926

Charleston Museum
Charleston, S.C.

Attention - Miss E. B. Richardson

Dear Madam:

Because of Mr. Wood's absence, I am responding to your letter addressed to him.

Of the three coins you sent, the smallest is an imitation (probably barbaric) of an issue of Constantine the Great.

The coin with the two heads was issued in Southern France, in the city of Nemausus (ancient Nîmes). They are fairly common.

The one with the date 1286 is a modern piece of Morocco of a very small denomination; the date is according to the Mohammedan year, which brings the issue after 1900.

I trust this will give you the information you desire.

Very truly yours,

Encs.

Secretary

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR

CHARLESTON, S. C.

Nov. 30, 1928.

Dr. Howland Wood,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155th & 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Dr. Wood:

Will you please be kind enough to identify
the enclosed coin for us? I am sorry to have to
trouble you so many times but we do greatly appreciate
your kindness in assisting us.

Very truly yours,

Laura M. Bragg

Secretary to the Director.

Enc.

Jan 11 1929
For
155th St.
156th St.
157th St.
158th St.
159th St.
160th St.
161st St.
162nd St.
163rd St.
164th St.
165th St.
166th St.
167th St.
168th St.
169th St.
170th St.
171st St.
172nd St.
173rd St.
174th St.
175th St.
176th St.
177th St.
178th St.
179th St.
180th St.
181st St.
182nd St.
183rd St.
184th St.
185th St.
186th St.
187th St.
188th St.
189th St.
190th St.
191st St.
192nd St.
193rd St.
194th St.
195th St.
196th St.
197th St.
198th St.
199th St.
200th St.

4th December, 1928

The Charleston Museum,
Charleston, S. C./

Attention of Miss E.B. Richardson

Dear Madam:

The coin you sent, which we are herewith returning, was struck during the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine and possibly by his immediate successors. It is one of the commonest of Roman coins, and although it has in Latin the words 'City of Rome', the pieces were made at various mints throughout the Empire.

I would like to ask you a question concerning the slave-badges of Charleston. We have six or eight of them, all lozenge-shaped, running from 1833 into the 60's. Some are marked 'Servants', others 'Porter', and one, 'Mechanic'. We also have an oval cast badge with a liberty cap on a pole, marked 'Free', which we should judge was worn by a freed slave. We have never seen any of these badges from any city other than Charleston and Charleston Neck. Do you know if they were used anywhere else? We should judge they were to aid the authorities in determining at various times those servants that had business to be out. Has anything ever been written on these?

Very truly yours,

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR

CHARLESTON, S. C.

Dec. 15, 1920.

Dr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155th and 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Dr. Wood:

I am sorry I cannot tell you anything of value about the slave badges. I did not realize that they were used only in Charleston because we have never tried to secure any and, of course, those that have been given to us here in the city were owned by ~~former~~ Charlestonians.

We have an old museum label, written by Dr. Gabriel M. Denigault, who was at one time curator of the Museum, which reads:

"Copper badge purchasable from Police authorities of City of Charleston, before emancipation and entrusted to reliable slaves, enabling them to be out on errands or otherwise after 9 & 10 O'clock at night."

The City Gazette or The Daily Advertiser (Charleston, S.C.) has the following advertisement for Saturday, January 19, 1788: "Advertisement, Paddes, Cart and Dray Licenses. Notice is hereby given, That badges for the year 1788, are ready to be delivered to the owners of slaves who go out to work or hire: Also, licences for all carts and drays in this city. BY ORDER OF HIS HONOR The INDENTANT. John McCall, City-Treasurer, City-Treasurer's Office. Jan. 1788."

The earliest one that the Museum owns is dated 1812. They all seem to be lozenge-shaped and the later ones are much smaller and of inferior quality.

I do not know of anything that has been written about these interesting badges but if I find anything I will let you know.

Very truly yours,

Laura M. Bragg

Secretary to the Director.

18th December, 1928

Miss Emma D. Richardson,
The Charleston Museum,
Charleston, S.C.

Dear Miss Richardson:

Thank you very much indeed for the information regarding the Charleston slave badges conveyed in your letter of the 15th. Although I may have said that Charleston was the only city to issue these, I should have said that all the slave badges I have heard of or seen are from that city. I am enclosing a list of the badges we have.

Very truly yours,

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

LAURA M. BRAGG, DIRECTOR

CHARLESTON, S. C.

Sept. 27, 1930.

Dr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155th & 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Dr. Wood:

I sent you on Wednesday a mutilated medal
apparently of lead which had been brought in for
identification. Anything you can tell me about it
will be appreciated.

I am enclosing stamps to cover return postage.

Very truly yours,

Emma B. Richardson

Secretary to the Director

Sept. 30, 1930

The Charleston Museum

Charleston, S.C.

Atten. Miss Emma B. Richardson

Dear Sirs:

The lead medal showing Washington's head on one side, was a campaign souvenir of Harrison and Morton, during the Presidential campaign of 1889. These are quite common and are found in copper and white metal. I am herewith enclosing a rubbing of what it should look like, and I am also returning your piece to you.

Very truly yours,

Curator.

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

CHARLESTON, S. C.

July 3, 1933.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155th and 156th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Wood:

During February 1925 you very kindly identified a bronze medal for us. This was issued by the American Art Union in 1849 and bears the portrait of John Trumbull. You told us the die was cut by C. C. Wright.

We have recently installed a small special exhibition of medals in the Museum. Among them is a silver one issued probably about 1850 by the City of Charleston and presented to the survivors of the Palmetto Regiment who fought in the Mexican War. This is marked C. C. Wright.

The other day I was looking through some old Charleston city directories and in the back of the one for 1822 there are seven small engraved pages. Three of these are advertisements for different mercantile concerns. Two are signed by Wright, one by Charles Simons, "Chston" and one by Wood & Simons. The other three are not signed. One is "A Specimen" of the work of Charles C. Wright, Copperplate and Seal Engraver at 161 King Street. I thought you might be interested to know of this, and I have been wondering how Mr. Wright happened to cut the die for the medals issued by the Art Union.

Sincerely yours,

Emmett Richardson
Assistant to the Director

July 5, 1933.

Miss Emma B. Richardson
The Charleston Museum
Charleston, S. C.

Dear Miss Richardson:

I was very glad to get your letter as I did not realize that C. C. Wright was a resident of Charleston. As a matter of fact I had never looked him up very closely. I had always supposed he was a New York engraver. Possibly he did live north at one time. There is no reason to wonder why he cut the dies for the American Art Union because at that time there were very few first class die engravers in the country. He cut many dies, both for the government and private parties and was probably well known to those interested in having medals made. I have just looked up a little further information and find that he was a partner at one time of the die cutter named Bale of Troy, New York and under the firm name of Wright and Bale cut dies there and in New York City in 1852 and were succeeded by the die engravers of Fulton Street, New York City, Smith and Hartman.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

The Charleston Museum

FIRST MUSEUM FOUNDED IN AMERICA

CHARLESTON, S. C.

July 13, 1933.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
Broadway bet. 155th and 156th St.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Wood:

Thank you so much for your letter of July 5th
giving me the information about Wright the engraver.

I have been so envious of you because you had
a Free Negro pass and we didn't but we have one now, too.
I am delighted to say.

Very truly yours,

Emma B. Richardson

Assistant to the Director